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Sent: Wed 11/9/2011 7:38:17 PM
Subject: Passaic River sediment removal project: two press articles following the October 31 media event (in the event that you have not seen these)

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[Mike Pelenski of Arcadis, site supervisor, showing the two filter presses that will remove water from dredged sediment.](#)

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http://www.northjersey.com/news/132977958_Work_begins_on_Passaic_River.html

Dioxin clean up work begins on Passaic River

Tuesday, November 1, 2011 Last updated: Tuesday November 1, 2011, 7:19 AM

BY JAMES M. O'NEILL

STAFF WRITER

The Record

A floating barge festooned with construction equipment was moored on the lower Passaic River in Newark on Monday — the most visible sign that work has begun to remove dioxin-laced sediment along one of the most polluted waterways in the country.

MITSU YASUKAWA/SPECIAL TO THE RECORD

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[Mike Pelenski of Arcadis, site supervisor, showing the two filter presses that will remove water from dredged sediment.](#)

Crews in hard hats scurried along the river bank and on the barge deck, working to install a temporary sheet pile wall in the river to keep the sediment from spreading up and down the Passaic when dredging

of the contaminated material begins next March.

Beyond the workers, officials from federal and state agencies marked the start of the cleanup, more than a quarter century after the site was added to the federal Superfund list.

"We are standing next to a very sick patient," said Col. John R. Boule, New York district commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. "This is not a cure but only the first phase of treatment."

Initial dredging will remove 40,000 cubic yards of the most highly contaminated sediment, and is expected to cost \$80 million, said Michael Turner, spokesman for Tierra Solutions, which inherited liability for the site and agreed in a voluntarily settlement to pay for initial cleanup.

Tierra Solutions also will pay several hundred million dollars for the cleanup's second phase, expected to dredge up an additional 160,000 cubic yards of sediment.

The dioxin came from operations of Diamond Alkali and other chemical companies that used the site for about 30 years to produce herbicides, pesticides and Agent Orange, the defoliation chemical used in the Vietnam War. Dioxin, a byproduct of chemical processes, is a known human carcinogen, and sits in the sediment as far as 12 feet below the riverbed.

The dioxin "is a threat to the health of the community and a real barrier to economic development," said Judith Enck, regional administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, which is overseeing the cleanup with the state Department of Environmental Protection.

The Passaic's tidal action may have spread dioxin as far up the river as the Dundee Dam between Garfield and Clifton, and south into Newark Bay. Dioxin gets ingested by small marine life and moves up the food chain. Dioxin concentrations in Passaic River fish and crabs are among the highest reported in the world, and people are barred from harvesting them from the river.

A quarter mile from the site, another crew on Monday was finishing construction of giant filter presses and a water treatment system. Once dredged, the contaminated sediment will get pumped along a floating pipeline to this second site, then sit in gravity tanks to separate out water and the heavier sediment. The sediment will then get pushed through the filter presses to squeeze out the rest of the water. "It works like a French press coffee maker on steroids," Enck said.

The water will be treated, cleaned and pumped back into the Passaic. The dewatered sediment will be loaded into sealed containers, trucked to a railhead nearby, and shipped by rail to sites in Oklahoma and Utah for disposal.

Efforts continue to get some of the 70 or so entities identified by the EPA as contributing dioxin, PCBs, mercury, DDTs and other pollutants in the Passaic to voluntarily invest in cleanup efforts. The state DEP, meanwhile, continues with a controversial suit to compel companies to pay for cleanup costs.

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Officials unveil \$80M cleanup plan of Passaic River

Published: Monday, October 31, 2011, 9:33 PM Updated: Monday, October 31, 2011, 9:33 PM

By Seth Augenstein/The Star-Ledger The Star-Ledger

Andre Malok/The Star-LedgerA view of the Passaic River in Paterson, in this June 2011 Star-Ledger file photo.

http://www.nj.com/news/index.ssf/2011/10/officials_unveil_cleanup_plans.html

NEWARK — The first steps in a Superfund cleanup of massive dioxin deposits in the Passaic River were unveiled by officials today.

The \$80-million cleanup of the carcinogenic substance at the Diamond Alkali site on Lister Avenue has begun with the construction of a metal enclosure in the water, inside of which dredging will not kick the highest concentrations of pollution into the rest of the river, officials said.

The 200,000 cubic yards of sediment to be removed from this site in March is only a small part of the 4 million to 10 million cubic yards that need to be taken out of the river, officials said.

Dioxin, the active chemical in Agent Orange and a proven carcinogen, was manufactured by Diamond Alkali from 1951 until 1969 at the site.

Bob Martin, the commissioner of the state Department of Environmental Protection, called the stretch of the Passaic "one of the most severely contaminated waterways in the world," and said N.J. wants to rehabilitate the river at the polluters' cost.

Two parties have been held liable in court for the cleanup: Tierra Solutions and Occidental Chemical — though Maxus Energy, the prior owner, will pay for Occidental's part of the costs.

Michael Turner, a spokesman for Tierra Solutions, said the company was working with the EPA and the

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on the project.
Long-running legal battles over responsibility for cleaning up the contamination have kept the work from getting done, said Deborah Mans, the New York/New Jersey Baykeeper.
She said the community and its advocates would scrutinize the progress of the long-deferred cleanup.

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